

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CLAIM NO: HC11C01113

CHANCERY DIVISION

BETWEEN:

BEN JACKSON

Claimant

and

(1) NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED  
(2) GLENN MICHAEL MULCAIRE

Defendants

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STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

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Solicitor Advocate for the Claimant

1. In this action for misuse of private information, breach of confidence and harassment, I appear for the Claimant. My learned friend, Michael Silverleaf QC, appears for the First Defendant.
2. The Claimant is the personal assistant to the actor Jude Law. He is also the company secretary to Mr Law's film company.
3. The First Defendant was the publisher of the News of the World newspaper which had a considerable readership in this jurisdiction and which also published its content on its website [www.newsoftheworld.com](http://www.newsoftheworld.com). The Second Defendant was a private investigator engaged by the First Defendant to carry out various investigative activities. His methods included the blagging of information from mobile phone companies and elsewhere and the unlawful interception of voicemail messages.
4. From around early 2003 until at least 2006, there were a number of articles  

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published in the News of the World about Mr Law, which contained intrusive and private information. Although these articles contained a lot of inaccurate information, the articles generally contained at least a grain of truth which the Claimant and Mr Law did not know the source of. As a consequence, the Claimant and Mr Law could not understand how this private information was ending up in the public domain. One article, which was published in 2003, even referred to phone calls that the Claimant made on arrival to an airport.

5. As a consequence of these articles, the Claimant and Mr Law started to become concerned about the security of their mobile telephones and their communications. In addition to this, over the same period, the Claimant and Mr Law experienced unusual activity on their mobile phones including hang up calls and new messages appearing as old messages. A number of their friends and family also experienced similar suspicious activity.
6. The Claimant and Mr Law also noticed that journalists and/or photographers appeared to know in advance where they were going to be. This meant that when they turned up at meetings or a planned rendezvous, there were often photographers and journalists already present.
7. In the light of all these concerns, the Claimant arranged for both he and Mr Law to change their mobile phones and also to put their mobile phones in another name. They also hired security consultants to undertake sweeps of Mr Law's home and car, in order to ensure that no bugs had been installed. Despite all these precautions, articles still appeared in the News of the World and other papers. This caused further distrust and suspicion between the Claimant and Mr Law and those close to them.
8. In June 2010, the Claimant discovered that his mobile number and direct dial number appeared in the evidence that Sienna Miller had obtained from the

Metropolitan Police pursuant to the disclosure order made by Mr Justice Sweeney on 1 June 2010. In addition to this, the Claimant subsequently discovered from Vodafone, his mobile phone provider, that there had been suspicious activity on his account over the relevant period and that someone had tried to access the details of his account.

9. Furthermore in early 2011, after the commencement of Operation Weeting, the Claimant and Mr Law were both approached by the Metropolitan police and were shown evidence that their voicemail messages had been intercepted as well as other confidential information. In addition to this, both the Claimant and Mr Law were played a number of recorded messages that they had left over 5 years ago on the voicemail service of Mr Law's children's nanny, Jade Schmidt. It was clear from the evidence shown to them by the Police that they had both been targeted over a considerable period of time, from at least 2003-2006.
10. The Claimant issued proceedings against the First and Second Defendants for misuse of private information, breach of confidence and harassment. The Claimant served detailed Particulars of Claim which have subsequently been amended after further evidence came to light. Both Defendants indicated their intention to defend the entire claim and have served Defences.
11. In its Defence, the First Defendant made a number of specific admissions. Since then, on 13 December 2011, the First Defendant made a series of extensive general admissions in relation to the interception of voicemail messages. It has become clear and the First Defendant now accepts that the Defendants targeted the Claimant and the Claimant's voicemail messages and those of his employer and friends over a considerable period of time, from at least January 2003.
12. I am here today to announce that the First Defendant has accepted liability and has agreed to pay damages to the Claimant in the sum of £40,000 plus his legal costs.

13. Furthermore, both Defendants have also undertaken not to further access the Claimant's voicemail messages or to publish the Claimant's unlawfully obtained private information or put him under surveillance.


Counsel for the First Defendant

14. My Lord, on behalf of the First Defendant, I confirm everything my friend, Mr Thomson, has said.

15. The First Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the damage, as well as the distress, caused to him by the biagging of confidential information from numerous sources and the accessing of his voicemail messages. The First Defendant acknowledges that the information should never have been obtained or used in the manner it was and that the First Defendant is liable for misuse of private information, breach of confidence and harassment.

Solicitor- Advocate for the Claimant

16. In the light of the order which has been made and this statement, the Claimant considers that he is fully vindicated.

  
Mark Thomson

  
Michael Silverleuf QC